Subj: **Re: [Documentation Project] THE BOYCOTT & THE ALRA 1975**
Date: 7/5/04 9:38:25 PM Pacific Daylight Time
From: larryt@tramutola.com (Larry Tramutola)
Sender: nfwaleroy-bounces@listserve.com
To: marshall_ganz@ksg.harvard.edu (marshall ganz), nfwaleroy-bounces@listserve.com, nfwaleroy@listserve.com, nfwaleroy@hotmail.com

LeRoy et al,

Before everyone unsubscribes I thought I'd add a couple of thoughts to the ongoing discussion. Like others, I have basically been on the sidelines during most of the discussions. I am thankful that Marshall continues to push the envelop (and the discussion) in the hope that meaningful dialogue and not merely gossip will occur in this forum. As I have sat on the sidelines, I have been intrigued with several things. First, the seemingly inflated view that most people have of their work in the UFW. (sorry it just seems that way) Second, how important the UFW was in the lives of the "volunteers" as indicated by their ability to recall conversations and events of over 25 years ago. Third, how many of the key leaders in the movement (you and Marshall being the two notable exceptions) have not participated in the discussions. I for one, would find their analysis and observations significant.

I spent 11 years in the Union, was "recruited" by Fred Ross (I still have numerous tapes of Fred's training sessions), worked on the Boycott in the Bay Area , LA and Florida. Worked in the field office in Oxnard (post Eliseo). Livingston during the Gallo elections, La Paz, Hollister etc. Ann (whose mother Doreen was arrested and spent time in jail in Fresno) and I were married in La Paz, Michael our son was born in Delano and we still, after all these years, are politically active and close to many former UFW staff and supporters. I even authored a book on organizing that is based much on the lessons I learned in the UFW from Fred, Cesar, Marshall. Eliseo and others. Everything I have accomplished professionally has its roots in the lessons I learned in the UFW, so trying to find clarity and balance amid all the emotion and memories is difficult if not impossible.

Marshall's latest insightful email regarding the failure of the Union to continue to organize workers rekindled memories and frustrations that led to departure of many of the union's best organizers around 1980.

First some background. As others have noted, the passage of the ALRA in 1975 changed the Union in ways no one could have imagined. Workers now could petition for elections (with or without approval of Cesar or the Union), had the right to organize, negotiate contracts and demand representation. Administratively the Union at that time was a mess. Few people, including Cesar, had the necessary administrative skills to manage this new world. Almost without exception, our field offices were disorganized, unstructured and chaotic. (I am surprised workers didn't file OSHA complaints for the cleanliness of the bathrooms!) Each office had different systems, different procedures, office hours, different rules and more often than not the field office director had a short tenure and any new director was often overwhelmed and developed his/her systems just to cope with the work. There were no policies, no job descriptions, no system to evaluate personnel. The field offices may be nostalgically remembered by some, but working in one was hell. No one wanted to really deal with this.

The election campaigns of 1975-78 masked in someways how disorganized we

were internally. Our success organizing election victories (due to a combination of good organizing, good legal work, a supportive law, worker leadership and pent up demand) created even more demands on the local offices, which were understaffed, under trained and overwhelmed.

The success the Union was having, even with some election losses and some difficult campaigns (Gallo, among others) created an administrative and organizational nightmare. Cesar, wisely knew that the field offices needed to improve AND he had to get his own house (La Paz) in order. I believe his reading of management books and talking to management guru's (Peter Drucker etc.), his ill-fated experimentation with Crosby Milne's Pentagon-inspired systems, and even his association with Synanon need to be considered it this context. Cesar needed internal organization and management skills and was open to new places to find them. What Cesar saw in Synanon was an organization that was managed well and efficiently. I believe Cesar was intrigued that some of what Synanon did right could be implemented in La Paz and perhaps in other Union offices.

I was involved in one of the first two groups that went to Badger to not only "play the game" but to observe how the Synanon people managed their operations (food delivery, radio station, work responsibilities, etc.) In fact I remember more of that than I do of the game. I am not sure who was chosen to go or why, but the game was quite honestly not that big of deal. Those that went to Badger were generally matched up with someone from Synanon who had similar job responsibilities. After dinner and discussions the game was "played". Some people were good at it, some were not, some refused to play. I honestly think that those outside of La Paz over emphasized its importance. ---- What was important however is that Cesar was forcing La Paz staff to changeŠ to improve how they looked at their work, how they managed their work, how they treated others in the Union and guests in La Paz. It was Cesar's hope that by improving the work climate at La Paz he could create systems and improve the quality of the management of our offices and the Union as a whole. (It may have been naïve, but I believe that was his motivation).

At the same time our fellow staff in the field offices were facing an avalanche of work from workers in all parts of the state demanding representation, contracts needing to be negotiated, more elections, managing "hiring halls" and contracts that were rigid and unworkable and at the same time trying to take advantage of more organizing opportunities. "La Causa" had morphed from romantic views of workers, flags, songs, buttons and posters to a need to become a real union. More personnel and more resources to do the work were demanded by all.

Working in the aforementioned field offices, with few resources, the staff outside of La Paz viewed the ongoings in La Paz with justifiable suspicion and skepticism. "What the hell is going on in LaPaz? You are playing games and we are dealing with real problems and the survival of the Union." Field and organizing staff were beginning to say that the only way to manage all the work that needed to be done was to decentralize, develop more worker leadership and pour more resources into organizing, negotiating and managing of contracts.

In short the perfect storm was in the making.

At La Paz there were many people that frankly were not equipped to be good administrators. Often they were assigned there because they lacked the skills to be effective in field offices. Others resented being so far away from "the workers". People came and went, some for short periods of time, others for longer. Unfortunately there were no personnel policies (I never

saw any if there were) no procedures to evaluate performance or effectiveness).

For years, staff (including the Boycott) was kept to a manageable size by budget constraints and by working people to exhaustion. (LeRoy, you may have been the initial architect of this). Burning out staff was an accepted and appreciated practice. There seemed to be an endless supply of (untrained) people willing to work. Discipline was the key word.

At La Paz Cesar openly posed the question: "Are we a movement or a Union?" He often asked, perhaps rhetorically, if it would not be better not to have contracts but rather to speak on behalf of those in need. While he pioneered efforts to train new negotiators and talked of training organizers, I think he was genuinely concerned about the cost and the ability to invest in the personnel and administration that would be required to build the infrastructure of the Union. At La Paz, in addition to the field offices, some people openly and vocally questioned the leadership of Cesar (and I might add the leadership of Marshall, Eliseo and others on the Ex Board).

As in any large organization, there are some folks who for various reasons need to "move on". But instead of quietly in private telling people that they were no longer welcome "to volunteer" and dealing with the likely hurt and anger, people were "accused" of disloyalty and counter organizing. Unfortunately, the manner people were asked to leave was through a public humiliation and attack. It was planned, it was public, it was unjust and it was terrible. Removal of staff, for whatever reason, could have been accomplished fairly and easily in private and without the public humiliation. But once public accusation became the accepted way of dealing with personnel it was impossible to stop.

I have wondered for years why Cesar chose this method and I can only guess that it was in his mind a way of letting others know that dissent was not to be tolerated. (Being asked to leave privately is one thing, being publicly humiliated is quite another). As has been documented in this forum this was not the first or last of accusations against people or "purges." What was unique I believe was the public nature of the attacks and the total lack of fact in most of the accusations. Disagreement with "policy" now became disloyalty and disloyalty meant removal from the Union. It became clear that to disagree meant that you needed to leave, either willingly or unwillingly. Disloyalty, not incompetence or ineffectiveness became the norm for letting staff go. Loyalty was determined pretty much by Cesar and those "loyal" to him. Disagreement meant disloyalty and potential public humiliation. Just at the time the Union needed able staff, loyalty became more important than competence. It was a huge mistake.

During the garlic strike in Hollister (1980-81) and eventual election organizing campaign in the area (where we won 27 of 29 elections) we were helped immeasurably by the able and effective leadership of the paid reps from Salinas (trained under Marshall) who came to Hollister to speak to the workers about the Union, the importance of organizing, and the benefits they would receive if they became part of the Union. The Bustamonte brothers, Mario and Chava, Sabino Lopez and others were invaluable. They were loyal AND effective. Not long after our organizing drive was over I was asked to come to LaPaz to meet with Cesar. There, anticipating congratulations I was accused (in this case privately) of being disloyal. My attempts to explain that the success we had in Hollister was due to the workers themselves wanting to organize and the help we received from the paid reps fell on deaf ears. If I wanted to continue to work for the union, there would be no organizing unless Cesar authorized it. It was time for me to move on.

I never regretted the years I worked in the Union or all that we accomplished together. Unlike Marshall, I do not believe that "future movements" will learn from our mistakes. (Who among us read about movements before being part of one?). I don't believe Cesar's legacy will suffer any by an accurate recounting of what happened, both good and bad. More to the point I think we could all learn if others who were so critical to the successes of the Union (Eliseo, Jerry, Gilbert) added their voices to the discussion.

> From: marshall ganz <marshall_ganz@ksg.harvard.edu>
> Date: Mon, 5 Jul 2004 14:17:52 -0700
> To: nfwaleroy-bounces@listserve.com, nfwaleroy@listserve.com,
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> Subject: Fwd: [Documentation Project] THE BOYCOTT & THE ALRA 1975
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>>>>> From: marshall ganz <marshall_ganz@ksg.harvard.edu>
>>>>> Date: July 4, 2004 1:15:34 PM PDT
>>>>> To: nfwaleroy-bounces@listserve.com
>>>>> Cc: nfwaleroy@listserve.com
>>>>> Subject: Re: [Documentation Project] THE BOYCOTT & THE ALRA 1975
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>>>>> Leroy,
>>>>> I'm surprised you consider the story of the boycott the "real
>>>>> story" of the farm worker movement, although it might help explain
>>>>> why this list serve seems to be limited to UFW volunteers rather
>>>>> than to the farm worker leaders who also contributed so much to the
>>>>> attempt to build the union. Does your view conform with Jerry's
>>>>> with respect to the 1975 ALRA bargaining? My impression was that a
>>>>> combination of factors contributed to the pressure to pass the law
>>>>> including the boycott, to be sure, but not limited to it. As I
>>>>> recall various rural counties were running out of money for paying
>>>>> overtime to all the deputy sheriffs needed to patrol the strikes of
>>>>> 1973 and 1974, not to mention the costs of jury trials for the 3000
>>>>> some strikers who were arrested in 1973-4, etc. Your either/or
>>>>> declarations seem to miss the important way in which the
>>>>> organization of farm workers was the strategic foundation for all
>>>>> the support work, no matter how critical in a tactical sense.
>>>>> Beginning with the DiGiorgio boycott, farm worker strikers played
>>>>> important roles as organizers in the boycotts across the U.S. In
>>>>> the California boycott that year, 9 of the 12 boycott directors
>>>>> were former farm workers. This is not to minimize the role of
>>>>> non-farm worker volunteers, but to recognize that much of the
>>>>> leadership came from people who would not have been there had there
>>>>> been no strike, no core of committed people from whom the outcome
>>>>> was a matter of economic life and death. The boycott worked as a
>>>>> supplement to farm worker organizing, not as a substitute for it
>>>>> and, in fact, depended upon it for its legitimacy, relevance, and
>>>>> urgency. The futility of Cesar's efforts to "boycott by mail" in
>>>>> the 1980s is good evidence of what happens when the UFW tried to
>>>>> substitute boycotting for farm worker organizing, rather than

>>>>> treating it as a supplement to it or a support for it. In our
>>>>> earlier strategy discussions (before 1977) Cesar used to refer to
>>>>> three major non-violent 'weapons": strikes, boycotts, and the law.
>>>>> By the early 1980s he no longer had the capacity to organize
>>>>> strikes or make proactive use of the law, so he came to rely more
>>>>> and more on direct mail versions of the boycott -- and enormous
>>>>> political contributions such as tthe $750,000 given to Willie
>>>>> Brown. What was at stake in the "boycott" and "strike" debate was
>>>>> not just about the conditions under which one tactic worked better
>>>>> than another. It was about whose resources would be drawn upon to
>>>>> win union contracts. If the workers resources were required, as in
>>>>> strikes, they would have much more influence in the union. But if
>>>>> it was the UFW's direct mail program that could win contracts,
>>>>> workers would be just as dependent on the UFW as they had been on
>>>>> their employers. While Cesar in his later years might have found
>>>>> this idea appealing, it could never be the way to build a strong
>>>>> "democratic" union.
>>>>>
>>>>> Marshall
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>>>>> On Jun 27, 2004, at 9:31 AM, nfwaleroy-bounces@listserve.com wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>>> LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973
>>>>>>
>>>>>> First, thanks to Doug Adair for correcting me when I wrote that
>>>>>> the Catholic Church "officially endorsed" the boycott. Doug is
>>>>>> correct, they did not endorse the boycott. Rather because of the
>>>>>> effectiveness of the boycott, they appointed a national Bishops
>>>>>> Committee to serve as mediators between the UFW and the growers.
>>>>>> At the time we considered this a major victory and viewed it as a
>>>>>> sign of their support and their willingness to use their leverage
>>>>>> to bring about union recognition. This public announcement by the
>>>>>> Catholic Bishops also served to provide institutional cover, and
>>>>>> create more freedom for more progressive bishops, nuns and priests
>>>>>> to take a more public role in the boycott.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Second, I follow up on Doug's comments regarding the passage of
>>>>>> the ALRA in 1975. During this time I served as one of Governor
>>>>>> Jerry Brown's assistants and worked closely with him to secure the
>>>>>> passage of farmworker labor legislation. A great deal of my time
>>>>>> was spent organizing delegations - church, community, labor,
>>>>>> growers, etc. - to meet with Jerry in roundtable discussions and
>>>>>> hash out (and build support) for farmworker legislation. In
>>>>>> addition, I served as Jerry Brown's liaison and sounding
>>>>>> board with Jerry Cohen (and his UFW legal staff) and the other
>>>>>> players within the Brown Administraton, viz., Rose Bird and her
>>>>>> legal team proposing alternative legislation and then Assemblyman
>>>>>> Howard Berman's involvement on behalf of supportive legislators.
>>>>>> (Sometimes there were so many levels of intrigue at play that you
>>>>>> needed a scorecard to keep track all the vying interests and their
>>>>>> unspoken agendas.)
>>>>>>
>>>>>> During this critical period, I attended perhaps as many as a
>>>>>> dozen private meetings with the governor and the representatives
>>>>>> of the growers. Some of these meetings were large round table
>>>>>> give-and-take sessions in his conference room, some were very
>>>>>> small meetings in the governor's private office and many others
>>>>>> were speaker phone meetings with grower represenatives calling

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X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0

>>>>>> from different parts of the United States. What struck me about
>>>>>> each of these meetings was the influence of the BOYCOTT. The
>>>>>> primary reason the growers wanted legislation was to undermine the
>>>>>> power of the boycott. There was never any mention of
>>>>>> farmworker strikes, marches, or picket lines; it was all about the
>>>>>> boycott.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> The grower representatives (mostly large management-siide law
>>>>>> firms and high powered lobbyists) knew that only Jerry Brown could
>>>>>> convince Cesar to accept farmworker legislation. He would never
>>>>>> accept it from them! And they knew that Jerry needed to push a law
>>>>>> that was sympathetic to the rights of farmworkerw to organize
>>>>>> otherwise he would not be able to sell it to Cesar. (As I wrote in
>>>>>> my essay, the ALRA was definitely a playing field tilted in favor
>>>>>> of farmworkers and in fact did not even outlaw the boycott, but
>>>>>> the growers figured that in time and with enough money, the
>>>>>> mother's milk of politics, they could tilt this legislation and
>>>>>> its enforcement back towards them - and they did!)
>>>>>>
>>>>>> THE BOYCOTT. I do not mean to minimize the farmworker strikes, the
>>>>>> marches, the huelga flags flying, the Fasts, etc. but if it were
>>>>>> not for the boycott, there would have been no ALRA, I assure you.
>>>>>> (YES, I appreciate the fact that without the strikes and marches,
>>>>>> etc. there might not have been such an effective boycott.)
>>>>>>
>>>>>> And yet, I find it almost impossible to get the story of the
>>>>>> boycott - and its significance to the cause of the farmworkers -
>>>>>> adequately told through the process of the documentation project.
>>>>>> I suppose this often happens in the writing of history - most of
>>>>>> the pages are devoted to the flash and dash, to the human drama
>>>>>> and to the high profile characters AND not to
>>>>>> the seven-days-a-week humdrum, boring and hard work over a long
>>>>>> period of time, by thousands of volunteers in supermarket parking
>>>>>> lots and at produce terminals throughout the United States and
>>>>>> Canada. Very difficult, perhaps impossible to tell that story, but
>>>>>> in my view, it is the real story of the farmworkers movement.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> I would appreciate your feedback.
>>>>>>
>>>>>>
>>>>>> Farmworker Documentation Project - Year 2
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Subj: **[Documentation Project] SENT AT REQUEST OF MARSHALL GANZ**
Date: 7/6/04 6:26:32 PM Pacific Daylight Time
From: nfwaleroy@hotmail.com (LeRoy Chatfield)
Sender: nfwaleroy-bounces@listserve.com
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Marshall Ganz is having difficulty sending his postings to the entire group, so he has asked me (LeRoy) to send this posting forward:

It's not "boycott" vs. "strikes".

It's understanding how they were related. Earlier farm worker organizing effors that weren't linked to effective organization of farm workers (AWOC, e.g.) failed, just as earlier efforts grounded only in farm worker organization (e.g., the Japanese or Filipino unions) also, failed, although they raised wages in the short run.

The truth is that unions rarely succeed in any setting without significant support from the state - or other allies - in one form or another (look at how awful US labor legislation has always been, for exmple, compared with that of Western Europe and Canada). The reason is that employers can be very, very powerful in local labor markets, of which farm work is an extreme case. And even this is a special case of a more general truth about the way power works. A political scientist, EESchatschneider wrote in the Semi-Sovereign People th at "elites always try to localize conflict" because they have a comparitive advantage at the local level. Insurgents that are succesful find ways to make bridges to a broader turf, where they can find support to leverage against their local elites (as in the civil rights movement too).

Often this "outside" support comes in a political form; e.g., passing good legislation. But it also can come in other forms; e.g., secondary boycotts, consumer boycotts,etc. In the 1930s the Teamsters organized rural California, Southern California and the cannaries with a secondary boycott they could use through control of Bay Area terminals. The ILWU organized Hawaii in the same way, although they also got legislation passed that

helped them.

The point is that there is nothing unique about needing "outside" support when you are facing overwhelming odds on the other side. We couldn't do it through the kind o f labor "solidarity" that had worked in the 1930s (but not for farm workers in large part because of the racism that dominated labor relations at that time) because it was illegal. Our creativity lay in discovering we could build it around a kind of "civil rights" solidarity, ironic because beetween 1940 and 1970, racial oppression had become a way to mobilize support that it hadn't been in the 1930s -- just the opposite. (In fact all the publicity about farm workers in the 1930s - grapes of wrath, factories in the fields, dorothea lang, etc. all was spurred by the brief period from about 1935 to 1937 when farm workers became "white").

In any event, the thing to remember is that in all these case it started with workers and it ended with workers because it was about building worker's organizations, not about building boycott organizations (although your point about the political benefi ts of having such an organization is a good one). And a look at the Teamster canneries can give you and idea of what you can get when workers play no role in their own organization -- a staff controlled insurance business, at best, rather than a union.

In sum, you need to organize workers (at least we did) in order to have a succesful boycott, but you can't have a succesful boycott (at least we never did) without organizing workers.

Marshall

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